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1. PROBLEM:

What improvements would result from converting the official personnel and Applicant Files to an open shelf filing system.

2. ASSUMPTION:

That the present method of filing Personnel and Applicant folders can be improved.

3. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

a. Present volume of Personnel and Applicant folders is 1,400 linear feet which are housed in two hundred 5-drawer filing cabinets.

b. Fifty-two hundred personnel folders or 350 linear feet will be transferred to the RD/P element, but will be returned to the Central File area at time of the move to the new building.

c. Space allocated to the file room in the new building will be a secured area.

d. Total volume of Personnel and Applicant folders has varied from 1,200 to 1,500 linear feet during the period 1956-1958.

e. Certain travel documents are now filed with the Personnel folders in separate and individual envelopes.

f. Working conditions in the File Room are crowded.

4. DISCUSSION:

a. It was found that the two-hundred filing cabinets now used to house the official Personnel and Applicant folders require 240 square feet of floor space. Open-shelving required to store these folders plus an additional 250 linear feet would require 240 square feet. Conversion to open-shelving will also provide 25 per cent more working space in the File Room (Tab A). Use of Add-A-Shelf open-shelving would be most advantageous because of ceiling height limitations.

b. The 25 per cent of space gained will permit moving the Mail Room function into the secured area of the File Room (Tab B and Exhibit 1).

c. The quality of the file folders used has been questioned. TSS and the Bureau of Standards are testing this folder along with samples of others (Tab C). Thickness of the material in the folder probably causes some inconvenience in handling and causes the folder itself to wear out faster. However, a review of the terminated employee files did not indicate this to be a major problem since few of these files appeared overly thick (Tab D).

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d. Certain travel documents now filed alphabetically within the files and in individual envelopes are not used with the official folder (Tab E). These envelopes are filed in this manner because of lack of space in the Central Processing Branch.

e. Alphabetical arrangement of files does cause some difficulty in filing and retrieving on open shelves (Tab F). On open shelves the name is usually placed on the end of the folder and must be read vertically. An Open Window Guide is available which permits reading on a horizontal line (Exhibit 1 of Tab F).

g. General working procedures relative to the charge-out and follow-up on folders is satisfactory but working conditions in the File Room could be improved (Tab G).

5. CONCLUSIONS:

a. That an open shelf filing system will improve the processing and maintenance of the official Personnel and Applicant files.

b. That conversion to open shelving will result in a 25 per cent increase in working space.

c. That the Mail handling activity can be moved into the secured area of the file room.

6. ACTION RECOMMENDED:

a. That Add-A-Shelf open-shelving be procured for current storage of the official Personnel and Applicant files and that similar storage equipment be used for these files in the new building.

b. That the Mail Room function be moved into the secured area of the File Room.

ANNEXES:

TAB A - Open-File Shelving

TAB B - Mail Room Activity

TAB C - Quality Of The Personnel Folder

TAB D - Thickness Of Material In The Personnel Folder.

TAB E - Travel Documents

TAB F - Alphabetical Filing Versus Numerical Filing With Respect To Open Shelving

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TAB G - Working Conditions In Wing H, [redacted]

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A

## OPEN FILE SHELVING

1. Advantages of Open-Shelf Equipment

Open shelving eight shelves high will accommodate 6.4 linear feet of records for each square foot of floor space occupied by the equipment. In comparison, 5-drawer cabinets can accommodate only 2.8 linear feet of records for each square foot of floor space. The cost of storage is $3 per linear foot on shelving compared to $8 per foot in cabinets. Open shelf filing offers greater ease of reference than conventional filing in cabinets. Since there are no drawers to open, files can be taken from the shelves with one pulling motion toward the file clerk as compared to opening the drawer and pulling up and then back to remove a folder from a cabinet.

2. Disadvantages of Open-Shelf Equipment

The orientation of open-shelf files requires that careful attention be paid to existing lighting and ventilation facilities because of the height of the shelving. Care must be exercised not to install open-shelving in locations where dust will present a major housekeeping problem. Records filed on open-shelving are not afforded the same protection from fire as provided by insulated cabinets.

3. Types of Shelving

Two principal types of shelving are available. These are:

a. Add-A-Shelf Equipment (Exhibit 1)

Each shelf is a unit, and stacks of shelves can be made to any height allowable and desirable. Add-A-Shelf equipment, sufficient to house 1,600 linear feet of records, can be procured from the Diebold Company for $5,200

b. Divider-Type Shelving (Exhibit 2)

This equipment can be procured any number of shelves high. However, it lacks the flexibility of Add-A-Shelf equipment since additional shelves cannot be placed on top of the original shelving if additional height is desired. Also, unlike Add-A-Shelf equipment, divider-type shelving cannot be dismantled and reassembled in small modular units, should it be necessary to move the shelf file installation to another building. Divider-type shelving would cost about $600 more than Add-A-Shelf equipment.





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4. Open-File Shelving for the Official Personnel and Applicant Folders

In considering the most appropriate filing equipment for the Personnel and Applicant folders, continued use of the 5-drawer cabinet and Open-File Shelving was considered. A floor plan developed (Exhibit 1 of Tab B) will effect a saving of 600 square feet of floor space by using open shelving and will provide an additional 230 linear feet of filing space. Shelving will require 240 square feet of floor space compared to 840 now needed for 5-drawer cabinets. Open shelving costs less than conventional cabinets and in this instance would replace $15,000 worth of cabinets.

Since the proposed move to the new building is some time away, application of open shelving should be considered in terms of its effect on the present file installation. There would be the immediate gain of 600 square feet of floor space. This is equal to one-quarter of the total space (exclusive of the main corridor) of the filing room. The floor of the present file area has been shored to permit heavier loading but ceiling height would only allow erection of shelving to a height of seven shelves. Of the two types of shelving available, Add-A-Shelf equipment therefore would be most advantageous since it can be easily erected to any height allowable and desirable, and dismantled for re-assembling in the new building.

Conclusion: The open-shelf filing technique can be effectively applied to housing the official Personnel and Applicant file and Add-A-Shelf equipment is the most desirable and practical.



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TAB B

## MAIL ROOM ACTIVITY

1. The Mail Room activity of the Office of Personnel is presently located along the main corridor and adjacent to Wing E, [redacted] 25X1A6a while this mail room receives and dispatches mail for the entire office, a significant amount of material is received or dispatched for the File Section. The two incumbents of the Mail Room are on the T/O of the File Section. Under present arrangements an employee from the File Section is dispatched to fill in should a Mail Room employee be absent. Moving the Mail Room within the secured area of the File Room would eliminate the need for safe-type equipment now used for overnight storage, and place the two employees under direct supervision of the supervisor. A receptacle for hand-carried material can be placed within the wing and emptied at regular intervals by the messenger. Bulk material is usually not hand carried by office employees but left for the messenger pick-up.

2. Consideration should also be given to the flow of mail to the File Room in the new building. If the mail operations were located in the File Room, a pneumatic tube system could be directed there. However, present plans for the new building call for the Office of Personnel pneumatic tube system to be directed only to the immediate Office of the Director.

Conclusion: The Mail Room activity should be located within the secured area of the File Room in [redacted] and in the new building.

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TAB B



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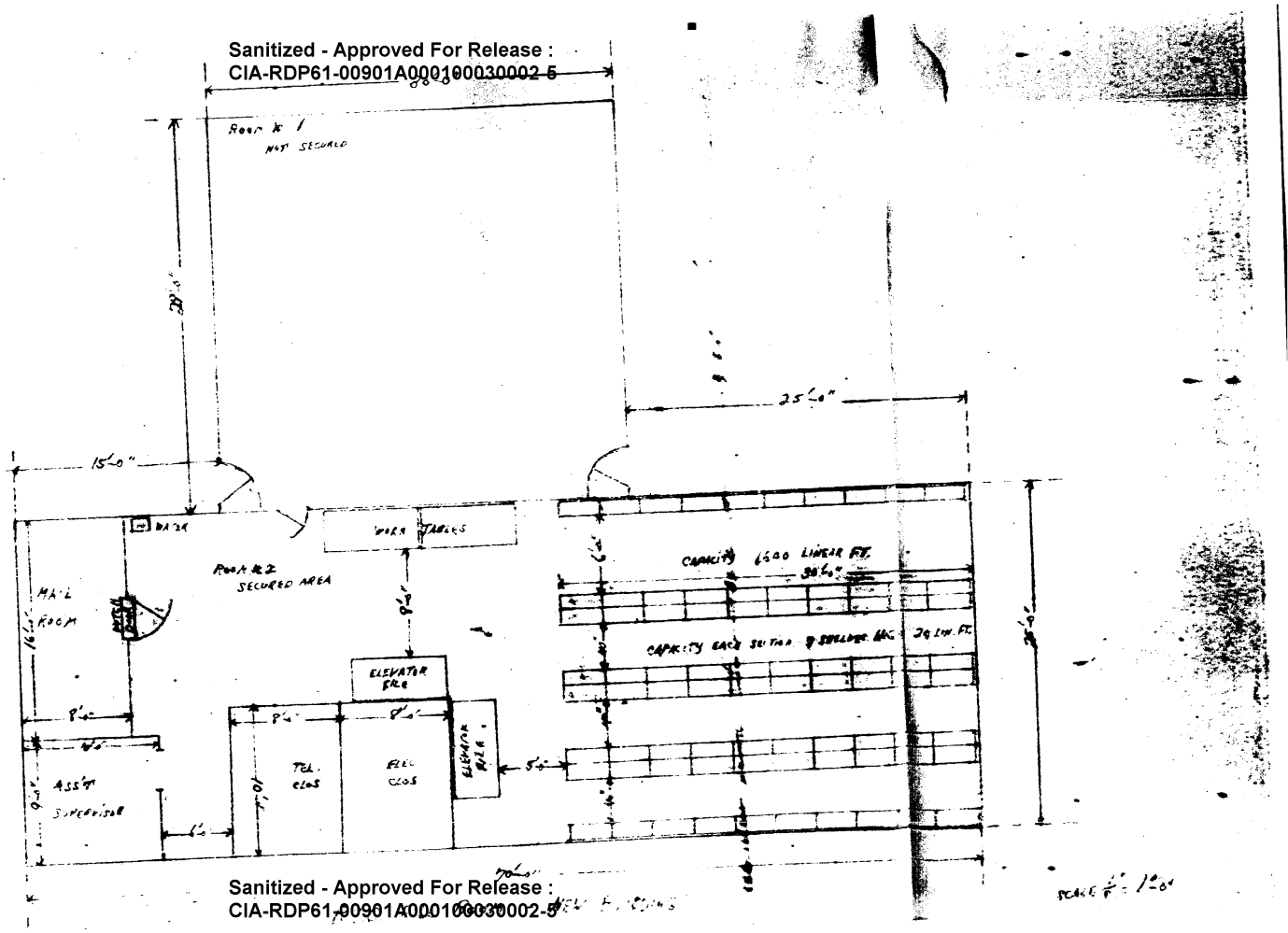
EXHIBIT-2- TAB "B"

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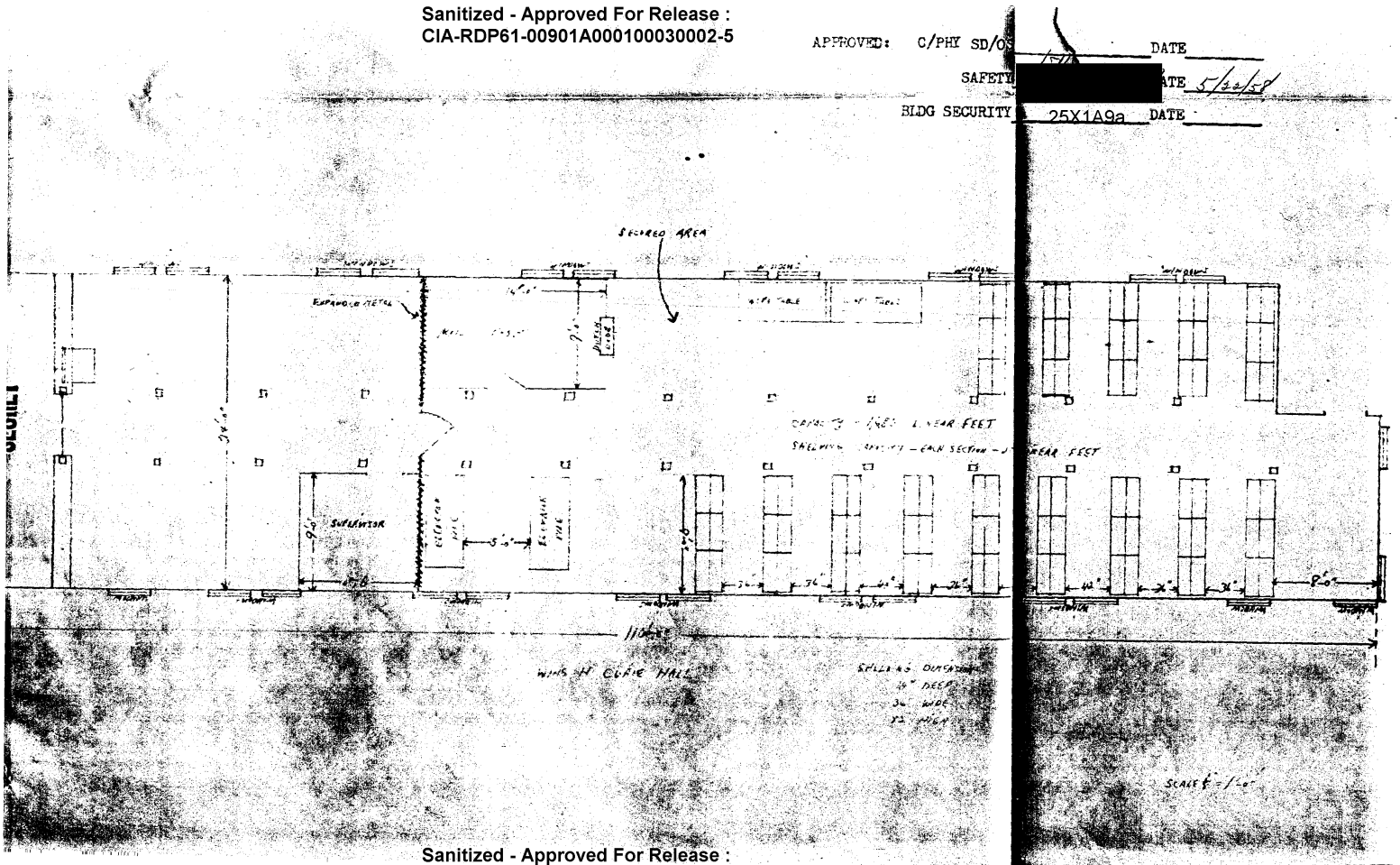
APPROVED: C/PHY SD/OS DATE

SAFETY [redacted] ATE 5/22/58

BLDG SECURITY 25X1A9a DATE

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TAB C

QUALITY OF THE PERSONNEL FOLDER

1. Quality of material used in construction of the personnel folder is questionable. Although approved by General Services Administration for Government-wide use, these folders have not proved satisfactory for the Official Personnel and Applicant files. There have been instances when folders ripped, fasteners pulled out, and reinforced tabs separated. This problem was brought to the attention of the Records Management Staff several months ago by Mr. [redacted], AMD/OP. 25X1A9a
TSS and the Bureau of Standards are testing this folder along with samples of others, one of which was selected by Mr. [redacted] 25X1A9a

2. The possibility of using a plastic folder, plastic impregnated, or plastic coated folder has been discussed with TSS but indications are that such a folder would be quite expensive. TSS is however investigating these possibilities.

Conclusion: The decision on whether the quality of the Personnel folder is satisfactory should be deferred pending receipt of test results.

C

TAB C

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THICKNESS OF MATERIAL IN THE PERSONNEL FOLDER

1. Tearing and ripping of personnel folders may be due in part to thickness or volume of material in the folder. Consideration of splitting the folder into two parts and retiring the more inactive portion has been discussed with the Records Center. The Chief of the Records Center has agreed that retirement of the folder in part can be accomodated provided a procedure for eventual consolidation is established. Maintenance of the folder in two parts by the File Section could be simplified through the handling of fewer papers when adding new documents to the file. It is paramount, however, that the correct portion of the folder be furnished upon request.

2. File Room personnel have estimated that ten percent of the folders have material over an inch thick. However, a review of the terminated employee files and discussions with files personnel disclosed that the bulkiness of the folders on terminated employees is reduced by screening out superfluous material. This suggests that perhaps more discretion should be exercised when selecting material for filing in the official Personnel folder.

Conclusion: Thickness or volume of material in official Personnel folders is not a major filing problem.





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TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

1. Envelopes containing travel documents are filed alphabetically, and behind the individuals official Personnel folder. These documents are in most cases prepared by the Central Processing Branch when processing employees for official travel. Lack of filing space precludes filing these documents within the office space of the Central Processing Branch. Discussions with the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Records Services Division pointed out that these documents are referred to only occasionally by Central Processing Branch personnel and are not in any way used with the official Personnel folder. As many as five separate envelopes dating from 1954 were found on some individuals. The idea of establishing a "master folder" to house these envelopes, plus the Personnel folder itself and other loose and more frequently used papers, has been considered as a means of bringing all material together in one package. Use of a folder heavy enough to withstand the bulk and reference activity would require thirty percent more filing space.

2. File Room personnel are required to file and retrieve papers from the travel envelope upon request of the Central Processing Branch. Establishment of a separate file for travel documents has been considered since this would tend to clean up the official Personnel folder file, and facilitate the transfer of the travel documents back to the using office when time and space permit.

Conclusion: Filing operations in the official Personnel and Applicant files would be improved by removing from the files these envelopes containing travel vouchers. In conjunction with converting to shelf file equipment, consideration should be given to establishing within the File Room a separate alphabetical file for travel documents. This file could be transferred to the Central Processing Branch when space and filing facilities in that office permit.

E



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EXHIBIT 1-OF TAB E

SAMPLING OF DOCUMENTS FOUND IN TRAVEL ENVELOPES

| FORM NO. | TITLE OF FORM |
|---|---|
| 50 | Memo Copy of Personnel Action |
| 61 | Current Residence and Dependency Report |
| 437 | Central Processing Control |
| 260 | Record of Transportation Furnished |
| 540 | Travel Order |
| 757 | Control and Travel Record |
| 797 | Insurance Questionnaire |
| 1220 | Central Processing Summary |
| 1220-a | Documentation and Services Certification |
| 1220-b | Travel Operations Record |
| 1220-c | Consolidated Check-Out Notifications |
| 1220-d | Finance Operations Record |
| 1220-e | Check List For Returnees |
| 1220-f | Personnel Check Sheet, Central Processing Branch |
| 1220-g | [redacted] (outgoing) 25X1C4a |
| 1400-a | Acknowledgement of Credit Union Payroll Deductions |
| DS 17 | (Original Copy) Authorization of Official Travel |
| DA 426 | Application For Identification Card |
| No Number | Cover Order Check List |
| No Number | ICB/CPB Check List for TDY Travel |
| No Number | [redacted] 25X1C4a |
| No Number | OCL/CPB Check List for [redacted] TDY, and PCS Travelers 25X1C4a |

EXHIBIT 1 OF TAB E

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ALPHABETICAL FILING VERSUS NUMERICAL FILING WITH RESPECT TO OPEN SHELVING

1. When shelving is used, the name or number must be placed on the end of the folder. Usually, the guide is so designed that it must be read from top to bottom rather than from left to right. This causes less difficulty with numbers than with letters, because people are more easily taught to read numbers vertically than letters.

2. The correspondence files of the Secretary of the Air Force are arranged alphabetically and filed on open shelving. These files were visited as they are similar to those proposed. Employees interviewed reported no appreciable difficulty in filing and retrieving from this file, which has tabs with letters running vertically. Since this file is smaller in volume, lack of a horizontal arrangement of letters on tabs may not be too significant.

3. An Open Window Guide (Exhibit 1) has been designed to permit reading on a horizontal line. The name label tab is flexible and will bend without breaking -- a desirable feature since the tabs project two to three inches beyond the end of the folder. This reusable tab could be placed on the OUT-card which is designed to contain the folder itself and papers received when the folder is charged out.

4. Folders with end tabs built-in as a regular part of the construction are available from several sources and in various stock weights. Use of such folders with built-in end tabs are not recommended, because the additional length of the tab would prevent filing the folders in standard Records Center storage containers.

Conclusion: The difficulty of filing and finding in an alphabetical file when using open shelves can be overcome by use of an Open Window Guide.

F



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TAB G

25X1A6a

WORKING CONDITIONS IN WING E, [redacted]

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1. Working conditions in Wing E of [redacted] are typical of those in most temporary buildings. The area is crowded because of the many cabinets needed for storage of Personnel and Applicant folders. Open-shelf filing will provide additional working space but will not relieve other undesirable conditions such as excess heat or poor ventilation.

2. Because of the need for service and the high rate of reference activity on these files, personnel of the File Room are among the last to be released because of heat. Collection of data or evidence of absenteeism or sickness as a direct result of heat during summer months was not attempted since it does not relate specifically to the nature of this survey. However, this function will in all probability remain in this area until the move to the new building.

3. Demands for accurate and expeditious service are placed on the File Room by the entire Office of Personnel and other Agency components. Approximately 2,000 folders are charged out per week. Another 2,000 are returned for filing along with individual papers and the travel envelopes. Installation of air conditioning units would greatly improve working conditions, relieve much of the fatigue caused by heat.

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Conclusion: Air conditioning of Wing E, [redacted] is desirable.

G

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